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THE TEACHER'S OUTFIT IN RHETORIC

To get at a just estimate of the teacher's outfit in rhetoric, it is important to define at the outset what is the ideal that he should set himself; for he may limit himself unduly, both in preparation and in usefulness, by thinking too humbly of his calling. He is in fact, if he will accept the position, the ambassador from a very high court, with a dignity in no way impairable by the lowliness of those to whom he comes. I have always regarded rhetoric as dealing, in all its parts and stages, with real literature in the making; and composition, however humble its tasks, as veritable authorship, well-meant and conscientious. There is no mystery in the literary art or mood which is not present in germ in the efforts of the schoolboy as he writes about the objects of his youthful interest; the difference lies merely in the different stages of mental development and skill. In the lowest stage, if there is aptitude there at all, lies infolded the crude promise of the highest. To put the student frankly on the basis of authorship and respect him accordingly, to impose upon yourself as his guide and model a corresponding standard of achievement and culture, is to impart immensely greater reality to his study of rhetoric, and to help him realize, what is the truth, that his exercises in words and sentences are concerned not with what will soon be superseded, but with constructive principles that must accompany his work to his life's end.

For such a standard the teacher's outfit cannot be measured in terms of mere book-learning ; it must be, like Jacques' melancholy, "compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and, indeed, the sundry contemplation of his travels." Books bear their part ; so do the methods and furnishing of the class-room ; but underlying all, and most important, is the culture of mind and character ; for in rhetoric as in hardly any other study the teacher has opportunity to impress himself deeply on the student's life, and it is important that he have the best possible to impress.

I

As to the outfit of preparation necessary, I would make no essential distinction between the teacher in a school and the professor in a college. For college work the material of thought and reading must naturally be more advanced, more literary and comprehensive ; but the high school teacher also profits, indirectly if not directly, by being at home in the higher walks of preparation, just as any one may drive a nail or saw a board better by knowing the whole carpenter's trade. The most elementary processes take a coloring from what lies above them ; and no less truly the higher undertakings suffer and fail if they are not strongly founded in the rudimentary work of words and phraseology ; so, whether in school or college, the teachers of rhetoric are working side by side at the same literary edifice, and one course of culture should be broad and generous enough to answer for all.

This view of the case points to a levelling up rather than a levelling down in the discipline of the teachers who represent the various stages of rhetorical work. True, the most prominent positions shelter some prosaic souls who in the highest literature can read only so much grammar ; but such limitation is devitalizing to the true rhetorical spirit. It leads to much better results if, working at the other side, the teacher is able in simple achievements with words and punctuation, and thence upward, to recognize according to the measure of each the potency of so much literature. To do this is largely

a question of mental and spiritual attitude ; and I judge that it is here the teacher's outfit should begin. The teacher of rhetoric is in his way a man of letters ; he represents the literary consciousness as it is amenable to the limitations of the school. It is this consciousness that should control, as he assigns work to his pupils or criticizes what they have done. The inordinate proportion of time that must needs be devoted to cleaning up his pupil's spelling and grammar should not subdue him to the idea that his concern is wholly or even primarily with such drudgery ; he is dealing rather with the creation and rounding of structures of thought, description, narrative ; and he needs to cultivate such vision as shall keep the faintly imaged ideal in sight in his contemplation even of the crudest efforts, just as the sculptor sees the statue in the rough-hewn stone. This of course does not mean a disposition to neglect the rudiments ; it means making them more necessary and significant as they are vitalized by the part they play in the finished work. Nor does it mean the erection of an impossible or too highly subtilized standard. A prevalent misapprehension exists just here. People are scared by the name literature, as if ordinary pursuits could have no share in it. A prominent city editor, speaking with me once about his profession, emphatically disclaimed having anything to do with literature ; his work of getting items of news rightly told and distributed he regarded as plain business, while literature he would probably identify with essays by Robert Louis Stevenson or stories by Henry James. But surely the literary achievement is the fitting of the task to the occasion ; and that means to tell a plain story plainly, to do the right thing by neighborhood happenings and items of daily life, no less truly than to dissertate on Italian scenery or the future of the American novel. It merely requires a somewhat different method of work, according to what you have to do ; but every task, whether plain or elaborate, calls for its particular knowledge and skill in the use of working-tools. To cultivate this very practical art, which is the literary art, and to carry it as far as time and spare energy will let him, so far from scaring,

may well be the teacher's cherished refuge and recreation. I know of no better sweetener of the routines of school life ; and in fact I find myself getting discontented and ill at ease if I go any long time without some literary project or pursuit on hand for my spare moments and meditations.

Without insisting on the actual production of literary work, however, it is the habitual respect for composition as a noble and exquisite art, and respect for every one who in however halting way is trying his hand at it, that I would have the teacher cultivate as his constant attitude in the presence of his students and of his work. It is by such means that he can best bear up under the dreary load of correction and revision ; by such means that he can best be patient with dulness and crudeness. In the aid of this insight, the discovery of the occasional genuine writer in the general mass of mediocrity is a delight that compensates for much review of feeble and commonplace work. And I am sure that this attitude is the best means of begetting that faith in the student, that interest in the student's aptitudes and prospects, which inspires the latter to do his best to realize if possible the ideal thus generously imputed to him.

Nor is this literary approach to his work on the part of the teacher without its more immediately practical results. It is the truest way to awaken that keen interest in subjects, events, details, which counts for so much more in rhetoric than in any other study. The paradox of rhetorical teaching is that results are not cheapened but directly enhanced when the pupil's tasks are robbed of all possible hardness as tasks and made as interesting, as fascinating, as can be. It is a merely mechanical grind, and so a bugbear to the student, to write a paragraph for the sake of so many figures of speech, or to make up out of whole cloth a passage in the impassioned style. For anything like good results he must be approached not from the side of style, but through his invention ; style must have something to work upon, something that enlists thought, insight, enthusiasm, in order to have life as style. Now the road to

this is through the subjects that are set the student, and through the way of looking at things that may be fostered in him. Open his eyes to what is passing around him, to the interest of a historic spot, to the beauty and suggestiveness of a picture, to the spirit of a game or excursion, to the point of an incident in daily life, and you are not only taking the best means to guide him to naturalness and life in writing, but are actually opening to his boyish mind that very treasury of material in which also men of letters are working. As guide and stimulator to this, the teacher needs also on his side to cultivate what Bagehot calls the literatesque view of things ; to think through the minds and capacities of his pupils, yet always as the suggester of projects and undertakings suitable to composition.

As a more immediate preparation for the class-room the teacher should do much work in writing out himself what he sets his pupils to write. He cannot well appreciate the significance of his tasks otherwise. This seems to me from my point of view as a college teacher a very important requisite ; indeed I should be ashamed of myself to have the presumption to tell students how to write if I did not test the forms and processes myself by seeing how they work in actual writing. It will not do to get into mere theory work, a mere spinning of speculations about writing ; if you do your teaching becomes unreal and artificial. You cannot rightly part the bounds of your tasks, or make your prescriptions cover just the appropriate ground without working them out determinately in practice. I have frequently written out my own prescribed exercise and reported to the class, and I think with good effect ; though I am not here advocating the reading of the written work so much as the private test of the problems and procedures therein involved.

One who has to do so much and so deadily dull work in criticizing, correcting, revising, need hardly be told that perhaps the highest preparation of the teacher of rhetoric is a character preparation. His work calls for limitless patience, limit-

less determination to detect signs of promise and hope. Of course I do not mean by this that he has any more call than have other teachers to wink at carelessness and laziness ; but it is not the careless and lazy that are the source of his greatest trial. It is the hard-working, conscientious, plodding, and withal utterly commonplace pupils, who do the best they can, who want to write well, but the write is not in them. Ancestors have neglected that discipline of them which ought to have begun two hundred years before they were born, or untoward home surroundings have shut them out from the genial influence of books and thought. Now what shall be done with these ? Obviously no cuffing or shaming or sarcastic process is going to do any good. Such pupils furnish the teacher an opportunity hardly second to that of the missionary, an opportunity such as no other department furnishes, to come close to them with shaping influence. For he approaches them on the side of that to which they are most sensitive,—their own work, their own best attempts at self-expression. Whatever it appears to him, to them it is a great deal. They wince at every thrust of his critical knife ; every hint of ridicule from him drives through their poor written words to their souls. As teacher and friend, therefore, it is his duty to treat their efforts always in the constructive spirit, and never to tear down without building better. Their crude and crooked thoughts are not to be despised, but to be directed into freer channels. For another thing, it will not do for the teacher to allow the work of revision to bore him ; above all he must not let pupils see that it bores him. Must he then manifest an interest that he does not feel ? I answer, he might do worse ; but, in fact, he can create an interest, if not in the work, at least in the pupil, in the young mind blindly struggling to expression. Such interest in the person will do much to impart patience and good temper and sympathy to the routine of correction ; it is the best means, in fact, of making the teacher's drudgery bearable.

From all this we can draw no smaller conclusion than that

the good teacher of rhetoric must be a good man or woman ; no sour or hasty-tempered or small-minded person is wanted here.

II

To come now to the teacher's outfit in reading and study.

The fact that a rhetorical teacher's outfit is compounded of many simples makes the question of books, whether for private study or reference, a difficult one to answer. In fact, he is like the regular man of letters in this respect, that all the world is his oyster, which with his pen, in his degree, he is to open. If his mind is alert, all his books will yield him material for the class-room and for the setting of literary tasks. To make books one must live in the atmosphere of books ; just as Milton, in his feeling of solemn consecration to literature, felt that a poet must be himself a poem. This applies to the teacher of rhetoric who cherishes the ideal I have defined above, as truly as to the author whose works figure in publishers' catalogues.

The manner of reading is no less important than the matter. One of my Leipzig teachers once remarked to me, "No German professor ever reads a book except with the intention of writing another." There was humorous exaggeration in the remark, but it points to the fruitful attitude in which the teacher's reading may be carried on. For he has first got his mind so wide-awake to the details and principles of his teaching, that he seizes and appropriates whatever makes for his purposes, either present or prospective, and so is spontaneously accumulating new materials or illustrations, or subduing and revising what he has, all the while. To this end, he needs to have the general field of rhetoric so thoroughly oriented in his mind that all the miscellaneous results of his reading and thought will at once reveal their character and pigeon-hole themselves, so to say, under the heads to which they belong. Of course to get into this way of reading requires a determinate self-culture at first, but it soon becomes second nature. In this department of study particularly, I think, there is much need of a more

scientific spirit in reading ; the spirit of close observation and analytic investigation, such as we see in laboratories and museums. What would not result if our teachers of rhetoric studied literature as a chemist studies the action of a reagent, or a biologist the habits of a beetle ? I have an idea that we in America are behind the English in this kind of study ; we depend for our principles and details on what is already threshed out for us and are not sufficiently awake to the suggestiveness of what is all around us.

Books for private study are most naturally those books which present the various facts and principles of the study in rather abstruse form. It is well to be familiar with these, and trace even simple processes to their source in principle, whether practical use is to be made of them in the school-room or not ; just as it is necessary for an athlete whose powers are to be tested in a public exhibition to train on something so much more difficult that his public display may come easily within his efforts. A historian must wade through many lumber-rooms and dust-heaps of chronicles, annals, archives, documents, and newspapers ; so also the well-grounded teacher has to serve his purpose from many a dry dissertation and abstruse theorizing, working them out into what is vital and interesting for use.

Of these books for private study I may mention such as follows :

Books on scientific or philological study of the language. Earle's English Prose is full of suggestive facts and examples, which have to be selected and coördinated ; they belong to the teacher's general furnishing. Earle's Philology of the English Tongue is an earlier work, less abstruse, rather more readable. Marsh's lectures on the English Language is popular and interesting, yet not unscholarly. Trench, Johnson, and others on the study of words, Oliphant, Morris, and Lounsbury on historical English, as well as books like the Verbalist and the disquisitions of Richard Grant White and W. S. B. Mathews, are books that the teacher ought to know. Professor A. S.

Hill's little book on *Our English* is very interesting reading. To books of this kind coming every year from the press, as well as to the new text-books on the subject, the teacher should keep his eyes open ; nor should the older treatises be neglected. They will furnish a swamp of material ; but I am presupposing that the teacher has an order in his head, in accordance with which his results, wherever obtained, will arrange themselves.

Books on, or containing casual notes on, literary criticism and method. These contain material of a more literary nature, but stimulating in many ways. I refer to such books as Dowden's *Studies in Literature*, Bagehot's literary essays, Lowell's literary papers, Stephen's *Hours in a Library* ; all of which are full of remarks that set one thinking. Matthew Arnold is suggestive, but sometimes cranky and always a little supercilious ; Macaulay is very strong and striking but not a sound literary critic ; Carlyle very inspiring but—Carlyle ; De Quincey acute, discursive, making excellent suggestions here and there, like grains of wheat in bushels of chaff. The older writers like Addison and Dryden are standard, but their criticism lacks the practical detail that we look for in more modern days. Books of literary biography, like the *English Men of Letters Series*, I find very valuable for the suggestions they contain of habits and methods of writers. They have the advantage of describing literature in its connection with life, not as a dried and ticketed museum specimen, but as the vitalized work which has gained the meed of success.

These are books for the teacher's "privateness and retiring," serving to develop and broaden his literary consciousness. More amenable to use in the class-room are works of literature themselves, especially such parts of them as exemplify great rhetorical forms. The teacher ought to be informed on the great descriptions, the passages of narrative, the great arguments, the great passages of prose poetry, the great examples of simple and satisfying style, and the like. When I see mentioned Shakespeare's "celebrated description of Dover-

cliff," I look up the description to see wherein it justifies its celebrity. When I read that certain English military men have called Captain Charles King's account of Pickett's charge at Gettysburg the greatest description of a cavalry charge ever written, I make a mental note of that and look up the passage. The "famous" chapters or paragraphs to which the teacher will be guided if he keeps his eyes open are full of rhetorical material that both he and his students may with profit read and digest. To become familiar with these helps him to know where he is, changes him from a satellite to a system, as he gets thereby more independence of judgment and more ability to recognize the absolute standard. Besides, it raises and enlarges his taste, so that he appreciates not only a plain, common-sense account, such as with beginners he has mostly to deal with, but the graces, the turns, the eloquences of literature, and can distinguish them from fustian and tawdriness. It is like rising to the self-reliant consciousness of him who is spiritual, who judgeth all things, yet is himself judged of no man.

Books of reference in the study of rhetoric are important principally for the means they furnish students of familiarizing themselves with the use of them. To be at home with books of reference, to be able to "tear the heart out of a book," as has been rather savagely expressed, is an important element in a liberal education, and students should be set at it early. A great many people go through life with the idea that books are only to be read through; and along with this they associate the idea only with such books as are read through—romances especially, and perhaps some biographies and books of travel. They stick fast in the lighter and more carrying part of the literature, and become passive observers, borne along by their reading instead of ruling it. The whole region of reference literature, of books consulted for elements of information that are to be woven together into a new result or vitalized in a new relation, is to them a closed country. It ought to be opened

early ; students need to be familiarized with book-land, the touch of literature, the principles of search.

In schools the use of reference books must begin simply. Of course a good dictionary, perhaps more than one, is indispensable. I need not enlarge on this. A dictionary of synonyms is of very practical value for every writer to have at his elbow ; and the use of one may early be brought to the notice of students. Soule's I find the best for lists of words, which are the main use of such a book. For the discrimination of synonyms, Crabbe's is standard but somewhat old-fashioned ; C. J. Smith's good, but a little dry and lumbering. The discriminations in Webster's Dictionary and the Century are useful, being in books of constant reference and so always at hand. A good book of brief, pointed, accurate distinctions, without superfluous words of explanation, is a great desideratum. So also, I think, is what may be called an encyclopædic rhetoric, something that shall do for rhetoric what Mätzner does for grammar and Böttcher for Hebrew—give very full lists of usages and the like, in analytic and systematic order. The rhetorician's thesaurus has never been adequately brought in from the widely scattered state in which materials exist, nor am I aware that any serious attempt at it has been made.

Books of general reference, too, may be drawn upon for material of research and composition ; and at the head of these will, of course, be placed a good encyclopædia, Chambers's, or the Britannica, or Johnson's. These will be, for pupils of school grade, the standard sources of information. Some great works of literature also may well be treated as virtual books of reference, a knowledge of their leading incidents and characters being taken for granted ; I mean such works as Shakespeare, Milton, the Bible, the Pilgrim's Progress, Ivanhoe, Kenilworth, Quentin Durward, Scott's poems, Vicar of Wakefield, Ancient Mariner, Henry Esmond, Silas Marner, and the like. Macaulay used to attribute knowledge of certain subjects to "every schoolboy;" and I think that by taking some knowledge of literature for granted and referring to it as

staple of knowledge the curiosity of boys, and especially of girls, may in many cases be roused to make themselves possessors as well as imputed possessors of such knowledge. I can not regard as exceptional my own schoolboy desire to know something about great names in history and literature, and to associate some definite idea with them. There must be a fair amount of curiosity in pupils, if it may be awakened and properly directed.

A collateral advantage in the use of books of reference is that it compels the student in some degree to put on the brakes in his reading. Most of the reading done by young people is pursued at breakneck speed, and only the main currents of incident or plot are retained in memory. Such a thing as putting two facts from different sources patiently together, or staying to form a critical judgment of any value on what is read, is very rare ; in fact, young students shun thinking for themselves as they would the Evil One. It is natural enough, I suppose, for a young person in reading to want to get to the end of his journey instead of lingering to enjoy the scenery ; but the rudiments of original investigation, of thinking for themselves, of looking below the surface of books, ought to be imparted in school life, in preparation for the time when the man will need to look about him.

Books on rhetorical method, if I may trust the report of my own quest for them, are for the most part still in the womb of the future. English teaching is groping for a method, and in the meanwhile each teacher must do correspondingly more to devise fruitful and interesting methods for himself. Methods have to accommodate themselves to times and opportunities ; if the time allotted is scanty, as in this study it is particularly liable to be, the method must cut according to the cloth. English has suffered much from the lack of adequate recognition.

The teaching of English composition cannot be carried on with greatest profit when it is conducted or pursued in the spirit of grind. It profits more than most studies by making frank appeal to the interests and enthusiasms of pupils. Some studies

may be made up by "staying after school," the pupil meanwhile grinding away, concentrating his attention in order to have the penance soonest over, and at the same time chafing with rebellion and indignation that his time for play is so mercilessly abridged. In composition we must reckon with this spirit as well as with the specific task. If only it could be like the old poet, "*facit indignatio versus*," something to the purpose might come from the punishment; but the student has not learned the secret of that yet. It would doubtless be productive of a more genuine result if he were let loose to pursue his inclinations, provided he could give adequate portrayal of such spirit and vigor in his writing. Such naturalness and spontaneousness is just what the wise teacher seeks to awaken. Here, then, the problem of method comes in—a problem not to be solved, perhaps, by books, nor by cut-and-dried routines, but rather by the personal magnetism of the teacher, making a method for each pupil as each shows aptitude.

Methods therefore should be varied. They may not become perfunctory or mechanical; this deadens everything. There is an inexplicable difference in the spirit and standard of different classes, which necessitates different procedures. The teacher also should not get into ruts; but when a new procedure commends itself, let him strike out into it boldly, put enthusiasm into it, and carry the class with him. The method may have lame points in it that will have to be healed; but the interest of the new features of it will go a good way to obviate defects. By this I do not mean to advocate experimenting and eternal tinkering; I presuppose that the teacher has a sound head, and judgment so to estimate his pupils and his work as to adapt new means to desired ends.

III

What I have to say about the equipment of the class-room will sound so much like a dream that the matter-of-fact reader had perhaps better skip this part of the paper. But as I am here working, in large part, to the ideal of literature as it may

have its seed-plot in the school, I may as well follow out my dream consistently to an end which, though never to my knowledge realized, would, I am persuaded, be of great service to the cause of good thought and expression.

I should like to see an English class-room so furnished as to suggest and conserve the literary spirit and atmosphere ; I should like the room to be sacred to this object. Our school-rooms suggest in various ways the matter-of-fact, the practical, the utilitarian, and this is right ; benches and desks are for study, books to be thumbed and ground up into lessons, ink-stands and pads for figures, formulæ, notes. All this is emphatically the prose of school life. It takes generations of historic imagination to glorify the deal cupboards, the carven desks, and the beechen trenchers of Winchester college ; they are commonplace enough to the students now, and the stewards long for dishes instead of trenchers to wash. Now I would have the class-room for rhetoric and literature, if I could, decorated with such pictures, books, busts, and the like, as would help the room in some degree to support the taste for refinement and beauty, history and imagination. I would have the faces of great poets and thinkers looking down upon the student's work. I would have some good books there ; such especially as would not only be of practical value but would give the student an idea of a good edition and a worthy form of publication. I would have some of the great scenes of history and poetry shining before him in works of art ; so that entering here he might come out of the sordid every day surroundings into a region sacred to higher things. There is too little of this in our schools ; too little of the spiritual and high-minded. And there is perhaps no class-room so well calculated to foster this as the class-room wherein we think and talk of great writers and their art.

To specify : a book-case containing the handy books of authorship ; the best dictionaries (several), a good encyclopædia, and hand-books of synonyms, idioms, allusions, phrase and fable. These I should endeavor to keep well up to date, and

should keep the pupils in constant rapport with them. To these I should add some of the best editions of the best authors, chosen according to the grade of the class. Then the pictures, busts, curiosities aforesaid, which I should endeavor to give the character not of a dead museum but of a helpful vivifying means of stimulating and supporting a wholesome imagination.

Of course the appeal of such a room, as of anything severe and lofty, must always be to the few. To the hulking fellow who comes slouching in with quilted breeches and foot-ball shoes, or to the man who appears in flaming tennis-blazer like a great potato-bug, you cannot count on much; his mind is already occupied, and he has his reward. But in every class there will be here and there a fine sensitive spirit who will open to such influences as a flower opens to the light, and one such is worth several seasons of foot-ball championship. The result may not be apparent now; but we are sowing for the future.

Such a chimera as this of mine would appeal very little, I fear, to school-boards and taxpayers. And I do not think I should make my appeal to them. Much may be counted on from the class, if handled in such a way as to find a cherished home in such a room. Why not let them, when anniversary comes, if they want to give something to teacher or alma mater, why not let them leave something for poet's corner? A set of books for future classes to use, or a fine engraving for future classes to see, would perhaps be just as useful in its way as an easy chair, or a gold-headed cane, or even a planted ivy. Thus the room would grow in interest as it grew in sacred memory; and it is better on all accounts to have such a place furnished gradually and with consideration bestowed on every detail, far better, than to get pictures by the yard and books by the cord.

Connected with such a room I would have clubs and meetings, entirely voluntary, in the interests of literary study and enjoyment. Why should a student come to hate a work of literature merely because he has to read it?—as is too often the case in the readings for entrance examination. Let litera-

ture be a ground for sociability and friendliness, and tastes may be imparted as in hardly any other way.

Such a room, and such uses of it, would furnish the teacher noble occasion for throwing himself frankly on the honor and refinement of his pupils. Let it be theirs as well as his, to use and keep in good order ; and few will prove unworthy of a trust thus bestowed on them.

IV

From what has been said it will be evident that the collateral subjects with which the teacher of rhetoric should be familiar are just the collateral studies of the man of letters ; that is to say, with the literary mind to guide, all is grist that comes to his mill. My ideal for him is broad and genial culture. He stands neither for classical nor scientific nor philosophical nor historical learning ; and yet he stands for the life that is in them all, it being his business to give his students first lessons in translating these from pedantry and shop into vitality and the natural color. So his collateral studies are—everything ; nothing comes amiss if he has the transmuting and transfiguring touch.

But on this matter of collateral subjects a little closer specification and discrimination should be made.

We naturally think of the man of letters as especially conversant with literature. In the minds of many young men this idea is still further sublimated, so that to them converse with literature means diligent perusal of short stories, and perhaps light essays and poetry, especially the sonnets, quatrains, and French rhymes of the day. They stuff themselves with this confectionery, with the idea that the graceful turning of a phrase or the pretty conceits of young men in dress-coats and young ladies in evening costumes are the stock-in-trade of authorship ; in other words that it is a question of manner instead of matter and character—and meanwhile their brains remain woefully empty of anything solid and meaty. This is like producing waves by splashing water ; it creates a surface agita-

tion and calls it a sea. Now such collateral as this, if important at all, belongs to the finish not to the foundation. Nor is it really up to the dignity of literature. True literature is a transmutation of much rough ore into pure and serviceable metal ; it is a structure which glorifies and utilizes its foundation. To this foundation, then, teacher and student alike should be directed ; rhetoric is really the architectonic and shaping spirit which *makes*, not the mere finished result, however fine and airy. Let the literature of the day as a collateral, therefore, take its proper rank and degree in the teacher's outfit ; not neglected, but not exclusive.

In fact every great branch of research furnishes in its way some helpful stimulus or discipline to a teacher so situated. The ancient and classical literatures, both in other languages and in the vernacular, are important allies ; for with them are associated in large degree whatever is great in style and incident and sentiment. Prometheus and Ædipus, Ulysses and Achilles, Æneas and the ancient Romans, Dante and Beatrice, Chaucer and Petrarch, Sir Philip Sidney and rare Ben Jonson, are inseparably married to the commonplaces of literary thought ; it is unfortunate for students of rhetoric to grow up strangers to these world-filling names. The fashion of classical quotation is past ; but the great deeds and sentiments of old will never die.

I need not speak of the broadening influence of history. Without something of it the writer, and in like manner the teacher of authorship, is confined to the narrowness of the present, with its political squabbles, or with its literary froth and fashions. History supplies perspective and proportion.

Nor will my teacher of rhetoric shun to look through the doors of science. Indeed, this supplies what is of all things perhaps most important, the spirit of accurate observation, and a clear conception of means, ends, principles. The writer needs the scientific mind, a mind productive as the very staple of expression of what has been called the "just-how" style. Common sense, a plain grasp of clearly seen things, this is the

ideal basis ; and along with this the power of showing its connection with the things of the imagination and the spirit. From the matter-of-fact region of science may therefore be imported much that is of great value.

In fine, my teacher of rhetoric needs to be an all-round man, such a man as combines in the finest spirit the best acquirements and accomplishments. I am not ashamed to magnify my calling. It is a pity if young instructors regard the teaching of English as synonymous with the wielding of a blue pencil ; a pity when they are restless in the English chair and are always shaping wings to fly to more desirable places. The teaching of rhetoric ought to be more than a preliminary ; as an end in itself, a life calling, it yields to no other profession in its capacity for the highest usefulness and influence.

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Amherst, Mass.

THE N. E. A. AT DENVER

This is a big country. The N. E. A. is the biggest educational association in the world. The Denver meeting was the biggest meeting in its history. These facts are all undeniable. There is certain enthusiasm connected with bigness and there was a good deal of it at Denver despite the four days' steady rain. But when it comes to crowding ten thousand people into a church intended for three thousand at most, they don't go in ; and when one thousand five hundred people wish to get into a hotel that will hold five hundred, there is an opportunity to run up the prices, and this opportunity, we are sorry to say, a certain palatial hotel in Denver embraced with more than western enterprise. The N. E. A. made more than \$20,000 at Denver. It has a good deal of money already. What better use could be made of some of it than to buy an enormous circus tent which would hold any crowd that could be got together ? This could be shipped from point to point on a special train as the Association travelled, and its erection in the early hours of the morning would be an added attraction to the